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May 5, 1976

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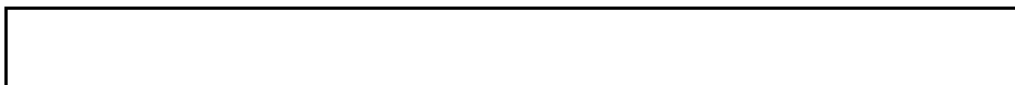
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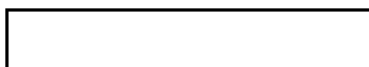


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LEBANON

The struggle between Christians and leftists for control of Beirut's port intensified yesterday, despite a call from the tripartite truce committee for a new cease-fire. Both sides are using armored vehicles and heavy artillery.

The leftists have made new advances but have still not penetrated the Christians' main defensive line. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The Christians must control the port in order to protect Ashrafiyah, their main stronghold in Beirut, and to maintain a major supply corridor north to Juniyah.

Although the fighting has not yet spread beyond the port district, nearby Christian and Muslim neighborhoods exchanged artillery fire throughout the night. The presence of Palestine Liberation Army troops in many disputed areas of the capital has probably helped contain the fighting.

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Jumblatt yesterday called for a "roundtable conference" in France following the presidential election. He has raised this issue before in an effort to gain concessions from the Syrians, who adamantly oppose any proposals that would loosen their control over political negotiations.

Jumblatt's announcement of the proposal just after a meeting with Ambassador Brown may prompt fresh Syrian charges of US interference. [REDACTED]

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EGYPT-POLAND

The US defense attache in Cairo reports that Poland apparently has decided not to sell T-55 medium tanks to Egypt.

The attache, who received this information from his Polish counterpart, believes that pressure from Moscow caused Warsaw to back out of the deal. The Poles produce the Soviet-designed tanks under license and in late 1975 reportedly planned to sell Egypt 150 tanks for \$30 million.

Warsaw's apparent refusal to supply the tanks compounds Cairo's problems in keeping its armored forces operating. Cairo probably wanted the Polish-built tanks to replace inoperable equipment in existing Egyptian formations, rather than to form new armored units.

25X1 [redacted] a large part of the tank force is in poor condition because of a shortage of spare parts. The Egyptians have told Western attaches that there are no replacement engines for the army's T-55 tanks, and that they are cannibalizing tanks.

Egypt is considering a reorganization of its army as one way to make do with dwindling amounts of equipment.

[redacted]

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USSR-MOZAMBIQUE

Tass announced yesterday that Mozambican President Samora Machel would make an official visit to the USSR later this month at the invitation of the Soviet government. Machel's visit, occurring soon after visits by Mozambique's defense, commerce, and information ministers, underscores the warming trend in relations between Moscow and Maputo.

Machel will almost certainly make a pitch for increased Soviet military and economic assistance, and the Kremlin—always anxious to increase its influence with Maputo at Peking's expense—is likely to respond affirmatively. The issue of Soviet aid to Rhodesian insurgents based in Mozambique will also probably be discussed.

The Tass announcement may have been timed to embarrass Secretary Kissinger, who winds up his two-week official visit to Africa on Thursday. The Soviet media have alleged that Machel refused an invitation from the US to meet with the Secretary.

The Soviets generally have treated Kissinger's trip in a routinely negative fashion. Moscow's sensitivity to charges that it played a role in Ghana's decision to cancel the Secretary's visit to Accra was evident, however, in an *Izvestia* article published yesterday. It labeled such allegations as "absurd inventions" that are another example of the recent US practice of seeing the hand of Moscow behind every difficulty or failure in US foreign policy.

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POLAND

Emboldened by the Helsinki agreements, Polish dissident intellectuals have circulated a number of documents calling for more democracy, freer travel, the unimpeded right of public expression, and a more independent foreign policy.

The US embassy in Warsaw obtained from its British counterpart last week a typewritten copy of the "broadest, most forceful, and most courageous dissident statement" that it has yet seen. This undated, unsigned manifesto is a comprehensive criticism of Polish foreign and domestic policies.

The document calls for the restoration of true sovereignty, full popular participation in government, civil liberties along West European lines, multi-party democracy, economic progress not founded on the sacrifice of the workers, and the free exchange of ideas and knowledge. It contends that relations with the USSR, while officially friendly, overlook two centuries of injustice, including the 1939 partition and the Katyn forest massacre. It argues that the alliance with the USSR is "costly" and asserts that Poland's natural ties are with Western Europe.

The document does not urge specific action, nor does it name names. Moreover, it is not a call to violence. It does, however, challenge intellectuals and workers not to "sell themselves" to the party but to develop "positive plans and postulates."

When the manifesto becomes more widely known, it will probably strike a responsive chord in many Poles. The document could heighten public tension over economic conditions and recent amendments to the constitution.

The regime has limited its reaction to earlier documents of this sort, but it may find it necessary to act more firmly in the future.

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FRANCE

Defense Minister Bourges has outlined his plans for the reorganization of the army. The plans reportedly include a decrease in the number of headquarters and an increase in combat units. The changes are in addition to the partial reorganization that occurred on January 1.

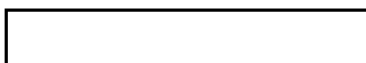
In addressing the defense committee of the National Assembly on April 29, Bourges said 11 of the army's 51 headquarters will be eliminated and the 140 combat units will be increased by 10.

Bourges said that army strength will drop from 330,000 to 311,000 men, contrary to an earlier report that President Giscard had reservations about a 6-percent cutback. There is to be no reduction in officers or noncommissioned officers. The draft will be retained, and conscript time will remain fixed at one year.

A key feature of the reorganization is a regrouping of units to eliminate the brigade level. The division will become the principal tactical element with seven new divisions added to the present nine. These will probably be light divisions, stronger than the current brigades, and will probably consist of four "regiments" and support units. The 16 divisions will include eight armored, six infantry, one alpine, and one parachute division. The reorganization would improve the army's unity of command and ability to react.



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